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METHODS OF WORK IN HISTORICAL SEMINARIES

THE historical seminary is now thoroughly domesticated in America. An entire generation has passed since it was first introduced, and we have already left behind the period of callow youth.¹ It is no longer supposed, I think, that its methods, or what may pass as its methods, are in place in every stage of education from the grammar-school up, or that its name may be rightly applied to all sorts of exercises, from genial comment on some standard historian by the instructor, to a club which listens to occasional papers from its members and lectures from distinguished visitors, or to the private consultation hour of the professor. We have come to recognize more intelligently the real purpose and plan of the seminary and to understand the methods of work which are proper to it.

No one is likely, I think, to dispute the proposition that the true object of seminary work is to train the historical investigator. This does not mean that every member of the seminary is expected to become a writer of history from the sources, or cherishes indeed such an ambition; but trained critical judgment, which is as valuable to

¹ The earliest true seminary work done in this country, so far as I have been able to ascertain, although it was not called by that name, was that done under the direction of Professor Henry Adams, of Harvard University, in 1874-1876, which resulted in the publication of the volume of *Essays in Anglo-Saxon Law* in 1876 by himself and his pupils. A description of the way in which this work was conducted, which I owe to the kindness of Professor J. Laurence Laughlin, makes it clear that it was seminary work of a high order of merit, as may easily be seen from the *Essays*, and that it was a combination of the methods which I have numbered two and three. The historical seminary by that name was first introduced into this country in the University of Michigan by Professor Charles Kendall Adams in 1871. See H. B. Adams, *The Study of History in American Colleges and Universities*, Bureau of Education, 1887, pp. 104-110, and W. Dawson Johnston in the *Inlander*, students' monthly of the University of Michigan, December, 1896, pp. 104-113. It is evident, however, from Professor C. K. Adams's account of the work done in his seminary during its earlier years that it hardly comes under the description of the seminary given above. See Adams, *The Study of History*, 109, and Johnston, in the *Inlander*, 1896, p. 106. It was made up of undergraduate students, it studied general and not special problems, and its object was the training of the citizen and the lawyer rather than the historical scholar. It was a very great improvement, however, on the undergraduate instruction usual at that day, and there is no doubt that the example of Professor Adams in taking this step had great influence on the introduction of the true seminary. Probably the strongest influence exerted to this end was that of Professor Herbert B. Adams during the early years of his connection with Johns Hopkins University.

the secondary-school instructor as to the university professor, is the incidental though necessary result of seminary work which is sought by all. The primary object is not to teach the facts of history but to teach the correct methods of dealing with the raw material from which the facts must be determined; of first judging its character and value; then of extracting from it all that it has to tell us, and not more than this; of determining as accurately as possible the degree of probability which attaches to the result; and finally of combining the conclusions reached into a systematic and comprehensive whole. An essential characteristic of the work is the practice of these methods together by a number of students of about the same stage of advancement, and the resulting mutual criticism and stimulus of mind by mind. Any process by which the same results are reached in the individual student by himself, however effective it may be in scholarly training, is not properly to be called seminary work. Nor, in fact, are any of the incidental results—such as a knowledge of bibliography and the tools of the trade, or the ability to distinguish among the new books appearing from time to time those of real and serious scholarship from those that have the form but not the substance—valuable as these may be considered, the direct objects sought. The real object of seminary work is the training of the investigator, and the methods to be considered here are those that have this for their result and no others.

The methods most frequently employed in historical seminaries may, I think, be brought into three classes, which I name from what seems to be a distinguishing characteristic of each:¹ (1) the intensive analysis method, in which the work consists primarily in the minute scrutiny and comparison of a small body of closely-related material, or even of a single document; (2) the comparison and combination method, in which a group of connected sources of considerable extent, or a single one like a chronicle, is made the foundation of a series of studies; and (3) the essay method, in which the work is done in essays on assigned topics prepared by members of the seminary.

The characterization of seminary methods attempted in these names can be considered satisfactory only in a rough and tentative way, but it may perhaps serve the purpose of a preliminary classi-

¹ In this, which is, so far as I know, a first attempt at classifying the methods commonly employed in seminary instruction, I cannot hope to have reached a final result, either in describing all the species of method, or in correctly indicating the points of strength or weakness in each, nor even perhaps in the number and distinguishing marks of the genera formed. I shall be greatly obliged if instructors and students of experience will send me such suggestions and criticisms as occur to them.

fication. The description attached to the names is also to be regarded as generic only. Under each of the classes will be found in practice a considerable number of species—more or less varying forms, but having in common the characteristics named. There will also be found some forms in which the characteristics of two, possibly of all three, of these classes have been adopted. Such variations may be disregarded as not affecting the purpose here in view: in general, from emphasizing the method of one or the other class, they fall in reality into that class.

By the term intensive analysis I have intended to characterize that method in which the work during each session of the seminary consists chiefly in the minute and careful internal analysis of a single document or of a group of closely-related documents or passages by all the members of the seminary working in common. After the preliminary study of the character and history of the material used, the object of the work is to extract from it the utmost that it may be made to yield, directly or by inference, each document singly or by a comparison of several; to ascertain the dividing line between safe and unsafe inference in each instance; and to formulate the result in as definite a conclusion as possible. It is especially characteristic of this method that each member of the seminary is expected to contribute voluntarily his judgment, reasons, or objections, or may be at any moment called upon for them. In seminaries of this class it is not necessary, and it often is not the case, that the topic of one week's work should be related to that of another, but a semester's work may easily be made to follow a systematic line of development if desired. It is also never the case that special assignments are made to individual members of the seminary.¹ The same material and problems are assigned to all; and, while every man must prepare himself in advance—and the more successfully the instructor conducts the course the more complete must be the preparation—it is essential that the whole work, from raw material to conclusion, should be carried on during the hours of the session by all.

Seminaries employing mainly or wholly these methods are far less numerous than those using the forms of the second and third

¹ The advantage of individual assignment is that more thorough and complete study is possible, which serves, so far as that one preparation goes, as a better training for the student and as an example and model to the other members of the course. This advantage can be secured in this method of work only by making the subject of each exercise a comparatively brief one, by carefully selecting such documents as are capable of thorough study in a short time, and by supplementing the work which the members of the seminary have done in preparation by the work which is done during the session. It must be noticed, however, that this advantage is only one, and that not the most important, of the many to be sought in seminary work.

classes. Peculiar and not very common qualities are demanded of the instructor if the work is to be made successful. He must himself possess the power of minute and keen analysis, of sharp insight into the meaning of his material. He must be able to see readily the bearing of one portion of it on another or of different documents on each other, and also to see quickly and clearly what is implied but not said in the language used. And yet this must be all under the control of a sound faculty of critical judgment, constantly exercised in all directions, which will not allow these processes to be carried too far, and especially will not suffer too much to be seen which is not expressed—the peculiar danger of this method of investigation. He must be willing to make very thorough preparation of his material in advance and to hold back his conclusions while his seminary works through to conclusions of its own, and even to hold his own freely subject to modification or rejection in view of the new suggestions constantly coming forward. He must be able to weigh quickly the value of such new suggestions, to help onward the half-formed thought and to expose the weakness of the wrong or fruitless suggestion, to impress on every one the points of criticism and method constantly arising, and to keep the work moving rapidly and all the members of the seminary at work to the full.

It is probably true that in this list of qualities I have stated the ideal rather than anything that has ever been attained in actual practice, but it is certainly true that qualities like these are demanded to make this method successful.¹ With them or something near them,

¹ At the time I was at the University of Leipzig, it was a student tradition that the seminary method of Professor Wilhelm Arndt, which was of this class, was one which he had learned in the seminary of Professor Georg Waitz, and that it reproduced by direct descent through him Ranke's original seminary method. That this was Waitz's only seminary method can, I think, hardly be true. See Monod, *Portraits et Souvenirs* (Paris, 1897), 101. Waitz's own description of his seminary method, with its brief remark about Ranke's, and showing that this was a favorite but not the sole method with him, is worth quoting at length, as it is not easy of access:

"Einen bestimmten Schriftsteller gelesen haben wir bei Ihnen zu meiner Zeit nicht, dass ich erinnere: später soll es häufiger geschehen sein. Ich habe nur in einzelnen Semestern an einen oder den andern mittelalterlichen Autor angeknüpft, Nithard, Liudprand, Adam von Bremen. Zu andern Zeiten haben uns Rechtsdenkmäler, Stellen der Lex Salica, des Sachsenspiegels, oder wichtigere Urkunden der Verfassungsgeschichte, die *Constitutio de expeditione Romana*, der Landfriede von 1235, das Decret über die Papstwahl, die Magna Carta, beschäftigt. Lieber noch habe ich kleine oder grössere Untersuchungen über einzelne Fragen der Quellenkritik oder der Geschichte selbst in den Zusammenkünften vorgenommen und habe sie schrittweise mit den Theilnehmern durchgeführt: manche kleine Abhandlung, die später veröffentlicht ward, ist so entstanden. Besonderen Werth aber habe ich immer darauf gelegt, dass die älteren Mitglieder selbständige Arbeiten unternahmen. Die Wahl des Gegen-

this method of seminary work is without question, I think, far the most effective in teaching the details of historical criticism and in training the critical judgment. No other raises so many different points and so many different kinds of points in the seminary session; no other goes so completely over the whole field of method or requires of the members of the seminary such constant exercise of scientific judgment under the sharp criticism of others. It has, however, one serious defect. It gives little, almost no, opportunity for constructive work. The problems which it discusses are usually limited in scope; it is not always easy to employ it, in its simple form, in such a way as to cover all the necessary details of a long and systematic development of either institutions or events; and it does not often give results that admit of more than brief statement. True constructive work, the process of creating out of an extensive and complicated mass of materials a well-proportioned and critically sound account, in which certainly the coming historian should have the best of training, it gives but little opportunity to practise.

The question is sometimes asked, whether the process of minute analysis which this method especially emphasizes can be applied to the material of modern history, and whether training of this sort is necessary to the modern historian. That there is a difference in character between the material of modern and of medieval history is certainly true. For one thing, the statements of modern sources are more full, more words are used, the whole thought is more nearly expressed, and there is less taken for granted which has to be extracted by the process of inference. For another thing, the sources bearing on the given historical transaction are likely to be far more numerous and of a larger number of kinds. What one leaves unsaid will in all probability be said by another; the student

standes überlasse ich gerne jedem selbst: auch das ist schon ein Theil der Arbeit. . . . So weit es geht, haben die Mitglieder unter einander Kritik zu üben; wo das nicht ausreicht, suche ich selber nachzuhelfen, . . . [This practice leads often to remote subjects.] . . . Nicht alle werden denn an der Besprechung des Einzelnen selbständigen Antheil nehmen können, und ich habe das manchmal als Uebelstand empfunden; doch wird für Erörterung specieller Fragen, der Behandlungsweise überhaupt, der Kritik, der Auffassung, auch der Darstellung, hier immer am ersten und besten Gelegenheit sein: jeder muss eben suchen daraus den möglichsten Vortheil zu ziehen." *Die Historischen Uebungen zu Göttingen. Glückwunschsreiben an Leopold von Ranke zum Tage der Feier seines Fünfzigjährigen Doctorjubiläums, 20 Februar, 1867.*

Whatever may be the worth of the student tradition, there can be no question that the influence of Professor Arndt's seminary on the students who formed it was profound. This fact is attested by the unusually large proportion of dedications to him of doctoral dissertations in all fields of history. See the description of his seminary methods which I gave in a letter to the *Nation*, XLIX, 252-253.

is far less likely to pass over some essential feature of the case because his analysis of his material has been defective. The peculiar training which this method of seminary work ought to give in especial degree is less necessary for the investigator who proposes to do his work in modern history than for the medievalist; that it is really of great importance for him also admits of no question. The habit of questioning one's material sharply for its full meaning with the keen perception of a trained analyzer, whatever sort of material it may be, is of the greatest value; and some modern material, like letters, *ex parte* statements, etc., demands such questioning as much as medieval documents. But analysis is not the sole nor indeed the chief object of this method; the general sharpening of the critical faculty, which is in peculiar degree its result, and the practice which it gives in all sorts of method, make some training in the processes of intensive analysis of value to the worker in every field of history.

In the second class I have intended to group those methods in which, to describe a typical form, some one text, alone or with a closely-related group of texts, is made the basis of a long-continued study, the object being not merely the close scrutiny of the text so used, but also the correction and enlargement of the results obtained from it by evidence drawn from many subsidiary sources. The especial characteristic of this method is less that of internal analysis than in the first class, but is rather that of comparison and combination, the specific object being to determine just what modification, what rejections, corrections, or additions, should be made to the text that is made the foundation of the course by information derived from the other sources. It finds its usual application to narratives covering a considerable period, like chronicles, the reports of an ambassador, a diary, a series of letters, or any similar body of continuous material. In some cases a single text is made to furnish the sole material of study; but such seminaries, if effective, are apt to fall rather into the first class; and, if ineffective, they are apt to degenerate into exercises but little if any better than ordinary college recitations and should then be omitted from consideration. The essential mark of this class should be critical comparison and combination. Seminaries in which specific problems, either unconnected or forming a connected series, proposed by instructor or students or suggested by the literature of the subject, are studied by bringing together and examining the possible sources, and those in which the history of an age or of a historical movement is made the subject of a similar examination belong in this class if the main work of comparison and combination is done in the seminary session, although no one source may be made the cen-

tral core of the study. The object of the work is still to arrive at definite conclusions from a critical comparison of the whole body of materials on which a conclusion must be based, and the method, therefore, does not essentially depart from that of the second main class as I have already described it.

In these seminaries individual assignments are almost unavoidable. If any considerable series of events is to be covered and a rather large mass of material to be brought together in comparison—and both these are presupposed—it is impossible that every student should do all the work, or that all the work be done during the hours of session. A part of the whole is assigned, some time in advance, to each man, who makes as careful preparation as he knows how. This is most often done in one of two ways. In one the student makes for his particular portion or period of the general subject a comparison and analysis of all the material, and presents in his turn the results to the seminary, his report forming the subject of the discussion at one meeting. This presentation is offhand, not in written form. If the reports are made in essay form, that fact so decidedly affects the method of discussion and criticism that a seminary in which it is done must be transferred to the third class, or at least must be considered as a combination of the second and third.¹ The presentation is therefore informal, it is constantly interrupted by questions and criticism, and that portion of the work which is really a scientific process is done in the presence of the seminary, and is to some extent shared in by all. The outside work of the student has spared the seminary the more mechanical parts of the labor and separated the critical portion for study by itself. In the second form each student takes as his especial responsibility one of the sources to be compared for the whole period, examines it critically, prepares himself on its character and history, and on the

¹ By the essay, as the term is used in this article, is not meant the written report on some topic incidental to the progress of the work and called for in its course, as, for example, in the case supposed above, where a member of the seminary might be asked to report, in writing if he chooses, on the writer of one of the sources, his date, biography, character, means of information, etc. It refers rather to the formal statement of the results of an extended special investigation as the method by which the seminary chiefly does its work. Though not contemplated directly as a part of the method itself, constructive work is far more easily attached to this form of seminary than to the first, and not infrequently a seminary is a combination of this method and the third in about equal proportions: *i. e.*, upon an extended preliminary study of the material as described, a series of essays is prepared by the members of the seminary, which then offers material for criticism of constructive work. See the *Beispiele von Anfängerübungen* given by Professor Ernst Bernheim in his *Entwurf eines Studienplans für das Fach der Geschichte und die damit verbundenen Nebenfächer* (Greifswald, 1901).

relation which it bears in general to the other sources, and represents his particular source in the meetings of the seminary. In this method the work of actual comparison, and of reaching a result based on all the sources, is done in the sessions by all the members of the seminary together. Here the essay is impossible, and an important part of each week's work may be regularly expected from each man.

It is, however, in the necessity of individual assignment that the weakness of this method under both forms lies. It is not an uncommon case, particularly in seminaries of the first subdivision, that most of the members of the seminary make no outside preparation except on their portion of the material. In consequence intelligent question and criticism come only from the instructor and from one or two who have taken the pains to study the whole material, and for the majority the exercise is one of observation, not one in which they themselves go through the work. In seminaries of the second subdivision this is equally true of all that portion of the work which goes before the actual comparison, very often the only portion that can be made to involve some of the most important critical training—the determining of the value of the individual text and of the relation in which it ought scientifically to stand to the whole body of material used. The only defense against this weakness is to be found, as in all such cases, in the instructor. If he has the power of inciting an interest in the general subject as it unfolds from week to week, of bringing out clearly every detail of it, and of keeping all at work during the session hour, it may be in great degree overcome. It must be said, however, that the incompetent instructor who finds himself obliged to conduct a seminary course sometimes finds in this method a refuge from his difficulties, and is able to give the appearance of work to what has little of the reality. I have seen seminaries of this type in operation which seemed to me to have practically no value, but it is true that this method is not that most often chosen to conceal, perhaps from oneself, a lack of ability to do the real work for which the seminary is intended. For training in continuous narrative history it is, in my opinion, under a competent instructor the best of the three methods, easily made to cover more completely the necessary points of method than the third, and more naturally to form the basis of constructive work than the first.

In the third class I would put together those forms of the seminary in which the work consists chiefly in the preparation of essays on assigned topics, which are then read to the seminary and subjected to its criticism. Nearly all the seminaries of this class fall into one or the other of two subdivisions: first, those in which each

essay is based on an independent body of source-material, whether the subjects are chosen without reference to one another, like preliminary studies in the preparation of doctor's theses; or are all drawn from the same period, like the Renaissance or the eighteenth century, but each concerned with a separate fragment of the whole; or from some historical movement, like the history of slavery in the United States, but each confined to one of its distinct phases. In the second subdivision are those forms in which a common body of source-material furnishes the subjects of all the essays, whether this material is taken up by each student independently, or, as is more commonly the case, is subjected to a more or less complete preliminary study by the whole seminary before the assignment of individual topics. If this common study is extensive and minute, the seminary may then become a combination of classes two and three, though still essentially belonging to three. But all forms of this group have in common one characteristic, that the scientific processes by which the student reaches his results are not subjected to the criticism of instructor and fellow-students until they are presented to the seminary as a completed whole in a formal essay. The individual does his work of collection, criticism, and combination by himself, and the processes which he has followed in this work are revealed to the seminary only indirectly and by inference in the finished product.¹

From this fact comes the peculiar difficulty in making this method of seminary instruction equally effective with the other two in the actual training of the scholar, if it is the sole method employed. Everything depends on the character of the criticism to which the essay is subjected when it is presented to the seminary. It is true of course that in every seminary method the most important element of success is the criticism of the individual's suggestions and results which goes on during the seminary session, but here it is peculiarly so as being practically the only means of instruction. If the criticism tears the essay completely to pieces, brings out its methods of collection, comparison, and combination, exposes the faults or merits

¹ Droysen's reasons for preferring the essay method were thus stated by Professor Godefroid Kurth soon after his return to Belgium from a visit to the German universities: essays seem to give more consistency to the student's studies, and to leave a certain permanent result; they furnish more readily the subject of a discussion; they enable one to appreciate more easily the student's power and his scientific ability; and finally they permit his fellow-students to profit more largely by his efforts. See Kurth's article in the *Revue de l'Instruction Publique in Belgique*, N. S., XIX, 93 (1876). Kurth adopted in the main the essay method, and through him it had great influence on seminary instruction in Belgium. See the volume *À Godefroid Kurth* (Liège, n. d., 1898?), dedicated to him by his pupils.

of method in these processes, and of order, perspective, and formulation in the final result, then it is accomplishing fully the work intended. Criticism of this sort, however, is by no means easy and is sometimes not possible. In the first place, it requires from the critic a knowledge of the material on which the essay is based equal, or nearly equal, to that of the writer, and this is provided for, in the case of the student at least, in some forms only of this class. In the second place, it requires the peculiar rhetorical faculty of detecting in the completed essay the processes of construction, and of bringing them out in the criticism in such a way as to make clear the faults of method; and this is a very rare gift, as the history of the English department of any university will probably show.¹ But more important still is the fact that, in America at least, instructors will in most cases hesitate at that sharpness of analysis and criticism which is really necessary if it is to be most useful, and that the student will hardly endure it. We are too thin-skinned a race to enforce or submit to this method in its most effective form. The sort of criticism which goes on sometimes in German seminaries of this class would, I think, be impossible in this country unless in exceptional cases; and, while it would be quite possible to divest the process of some of its European harshness without loss, it would be exceedingly difficult for the American instructor or student to acquire that feeling of impersonalness in the matter which is most essential. Really effective criticism is far more easy in the constant give-and-take natural to the forms of seminary work that are concerned primarily with the process rather than the result. It is then a part of the game to which each in quick turn submits, the instructor like the student if he is really leading the work as he should.

These considerations tend, in my opinion, to the conclusion that where the object is to give the student instruction and practice in the methods of historical criticism, in the correct preparation, analysis, and combination of his material, and thorough discipline of the critical judgment, the essay method is likely to be the least useful and in some cases of no use at all. If the student is to obtain his sole training in seminaries of a single type only, this is the least effective of the three. To this must be added the fact that it is in this form of seminary that the inefficient instructor gets most easily an apparent success. The selection of a series of topics from a mass

¹ In some seminaries of the essay class the attempt is made to overcome the difficulty of getting adequate criticism by requiring each essay to be submitted some time before it is to be read, and committing it in the meantime to some other member of the seminary, who is to study it carefully and prepare a more or less formal criticism of it. This method does not meet all the difficulties, but it is deserving of attention as a helpful expedient.

of material, or from a historical period, is not difficult; the writing of an essay, even without thorough critical training, is soon accomplished, perhaps more easily where thorough critical training is lacking; and a more or less superficial criticism of the result may easily leave on the minds of both instructor and student the impression of a considerable success, while the real work for which the seminary is intended is left undone. The general prevalence of the essay method of work, tending as it has during the last twenty years to supersede all other methods and to become a kind of fashion, ought to occasion, I think, serious thought to all who are interested in maintaining a high standard of university instruction in history. The difficulty of combining with it discipline in the primary processes of investigation and of making it the vehicle of an adequate criticism, together with the ease with which it may lead to an apparent success, should suggest the question whether the efficiency of the seminary is not in danger, whether it is not indeed even now ceasing to some extent to accomplish the results upon which in large part depends the future of historical investigation. It is often said that no other method is possible in a large seminary, but this is, I think, a mistaken opinion. It depends entirely on the instructor, and though in the methods which I have numbered one and two success is not so easy with thirty as with ten, it is by no means impossible, as I can bear witness from personal observation. Increasing numbers are in themselves a danger, however, and I doubt if by any method the seminary can obtain its best results with a membership of more than twenty.

On the other hand, if the student has behind him his training in historical method and has acquired the necessary maturity of critical judgment, so that the process that he follows in the collection of his material no longer needs supervision and criticism, it is also my opinion that this method is the best of all for teaching what needs to be learned and can be taught of historical constructive work, the process of putting together the results already reached by an earlier critical study into a well-proportioned and comprehensive whole. Not much of this faculty can indeed be imparted by instruction. It is in this particular, if in any, that the saying is true that the scholar is born and not made. And yet, if it is possible to keep always in mind the fact that the peculiar usefulness of the essay method is in the field of constructive work, it is a very important part of the scholar's training.

It is my own feeling that if, in the organization of its advanced history work, a university finds itself able to provide a well-led seminary of the first type, and also another of that form of the third in

which a body of material studied in common by way of introduction, and providing a common basis of knowledge for mutual criticism, furnishes topics for essays by all the members of the seminary, it will be in position to offer to its students the seminary advantages which are practically the best possible. In calling attention to the points of strength and weakness of each form of seminary here discussed, it has not been my purpose to criticize any form unfavorably, or to indicate a personal judgment in favor of one rather than another method. There is in my opinion no ideally best method. What is best in each case is a special question to be determined by the particular circumstances and by the preferences and capabilities of the instructor. It has rather been my purpose to point out what needs to be guarded against in each method, or supplemented by combination with another, in order to make its efficiency more nearly perfect. In the conduct of every seminary, of whatever form, there are, I think, three things that should always be striven for: (1) that each student should go through, as nearly as possible, all the work of the seminary himself and through all the processes and steps of historical method; (2) that in each session of the seminary every student, as nearly as possible, should take part in the work, and that no one should be allowed to fall back into the position of an observer; (3) that in all the work of the seminary there should be no let-up of adequate, searching, and severe but kindly criticism. These things seem to me essential to the highest success in any method, and with them any method will accomplish valuable results.

When all has been said, however, we must not overlook the fact that the seminary method is not the only one for the training of historical scholars. The name "seminary" has in itself no talismanic property. My own belief is that if the German universities had developed their higher instruction by a natural process of growth out of something like our early system of college recitations, as we should undoubtedly have done if our higher educational forms had grown up without influence from abroad, the seminary never would have existed as a distinct institution. Precisely the same result would have been accomplished in courses of study not distinguished by name or character from the ordinary work of the university,¹ and the work would have been done with equal efficiency and with less self-consciousness. As it is, we have the seminary, and the result is not to be regretted. But we should recognize the fact that

¹ This is practically what happens in courses in diplomatics and paleography. Many courses in the *École des Chartes*, and those of the London School of Economics and Political Science conducted by Mr. Hubert Hall, to mention only those of which I have some personal knowledge, are really seminary courses whether they bear the name or not, and this must be generally true, I think.

there are at least two other methods by which scholars are trained, perhaps always to be found where seminaries exist in universities worthy of the name, but in many cases the only methods. These may be called the methods of personal example and of private consultation and advice.¹ Probably in the real training of the best historical workers these things have had as much influence as any other, and the cases are by no means few where they have constituted the sole training. If a man is born with the instincts of a scholar, the seed of a living example falls on good ground and brings forth much fruit. Such a man may indeed be carried further by the influence of personal example and by the private advice and direction of an older scholar than by class work alone, indispensable as this is for certain types of mind. If the seminary were on trial for its existence, its defense would be, not that it is the only method of training the scholar, but that it gives the best average result with the student body as a whole. The instructor who is in a position where he can control his human material, and refuse to do his best training work with anything but the best men, will probably be able to produce results more striking and more uniformly of a high order of merit than those who are differently situated.

GEORGE BURTON ADAMS.

¹ The tutorial method of the English universities, so far as it employs original materials, seems not unlike a combination between the essay seminary, though with very small classes if in classes at all, and the method of private guidance. Its success in producing highly trained scholars no one can deny, though to the outsider it seems to be wastefully expensive in its use of the instructor's time.